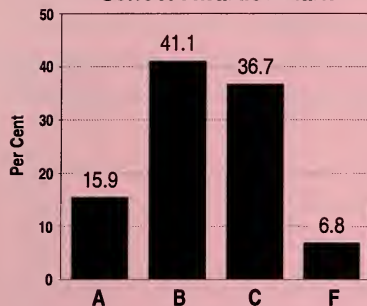


English 30

Diploma Examination Results Examiners' Report for January 1993

School-Awarded Mark

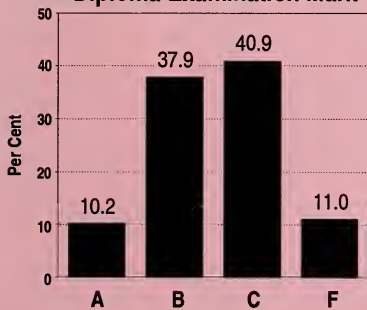


The summary information in this report provides teachers, school administrators, students, and the general public with an overview of results from the January 1993 administration of the English 30 Diploma Examination. This information is most helpful when used in conjunction with the detailed school and jurisdiction reports that have been mailed to schools and school jurisdiction offices. An annual provincial report containing a detailed analysis of the combined January, June, and August results is published each year.

Description of the Examination

The English 30 Diploma Examination consists of two parts: a written-response section and a reading section. Each part is worth 50% of the total examination mark.

Diploma Examination Mark

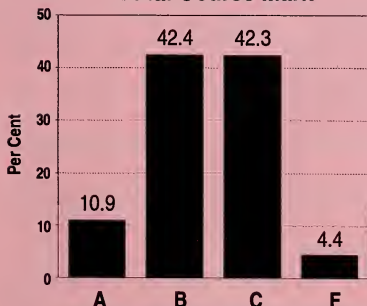


Achievement of Standards

The information reported is based on the final course marks achieved by 10 657 students who wrote the January 1993 examination.

- 95.6% of these students achieved the acceptable standard (a final course mark of 50% or higher).
- 10.9% of these students achieved the standard of excellence (a final course mark of 80% or higher).

Final Course Mark



The competence of students achieving the standard of excellence in writing was impressive. However, the skills students at the satisfactory level demonstrated tended to be uneven; students showed ability on occasion to use language well, but this was not always sustained.

Provincial Averages

- The average school-awarded mark was 66.1%.
- The average diploma examination mark was 64.0%.
- The average final course mark, representing an equal weighting of the school-awarded mark and the diploma examination mark, was 65.6%.

Part A: Written Response

Part A: Written Response is written at a different time from *Part B: Reading*. Students are required to complete two writing assignments related to the same piece of literature. Both assignments assess a variety of writing and thinking skills.

Readers will find the results most meaningful in the context of the assignments and the scoring descriptors. The most useful starting place for reviewing these results is at the **(3) Satisfactory** level. Such work exceeds the pass mark of 50%. The scoring guides that describe proficiency levels are in the *English 30 Diploma Examination Bulletin Update for 1992*, which is available in all schools.

The table below outlines the requirements for each assignment, the categories for scoring each assignment, the amount each category contributes to the total mark (parts A and B combined), and the percentage of students achieving at the various levels.

Examination Blueprint and Percentage Distribution of Scores

Description of the Writing Assignment	Scoring Category	Proportion of Total Mark (%)	Percentage Distribution of Scores					
			(5) Excellent	(4) Proficient	(3) Satisfactory	(2) Limited	(1) Poor	Ins*
Minor Assignment The student is required to write a personal response to the reading selection provided in the examination.	1. Thought and Detail	7.5	3.3	30.8	56.1	8.8	0.6	0.3
	2. Writing Skills	7.5	3.3	29.8	55.7	9.7	1.1	0.3
Major Assignment The major assignment maintains a thematic connection to the minor assignment. The student is required to demonstrate an appreciation of literary works studied in class by discussing theme and the literary techniques that the author uses to support that theme. The student is also required to synthesize thoughts clearly and correctly in writing.	1. Total Impression	5.0	2.2	16.8	57.6	22.0	1.1	0.3
	2. Thought and Detail	12.5	2.5	17.6	48.6	29.2	1.8	0.3
	3. Organization	7.5	2.2	18.0	61.2	17.5	0.9	0.3
	4. Matters of Choice	5.0	2.9	22.2	60.7	12.8	1.1	0.3
	5. Matters of Convention	5.0	3.9	26.6	52.9	14.5	1.8	0.3

***Ins** (Insufficient) is a special category that includes students who did not attempt the assignment, who wrote too little to evaluate, or who wrote answers that were completely off topic.

Note: The shaded portion represents the percentage of students who achieved or exceeded a **(3) Satisfactory** level of performance.

Minor Assignment: Personal Response to Literature

In the literature selection, an excerpt from the novel *Wild Geese*, a young woman, Jude, expresses her longing to escape the circumstances surrounding her. The assignment focused on the author's use of descriptive detail to convey to the reader a sense of Jude's longing to escape. Students were required to select one (or more) effective detail and relate it to their own experience of a longing to escape.

In responding to the implications of the excerpt and the assignment, students chose a variety of detail; they discussed various types of escape; they addressed personal experience or observations in a number of ways. The change in the assignment wording—asking students to choose “one or more details” rather than to select a “quotation”—seems to have been clear and manageable for students.

Students achieving overall scores of **(3) Satisfactory** chose appropriate details that provided general support in their writing. Many students wrote of a longing for freedom—freedom from the restrictions of parents and school. Students writing at the **(3) Satisfactory** level produced clear and generally straightforward writing.

Students achieving overall scores of **(4) Proficient** and **(5) Excellent** often appeared to appreciate and respond to the more subtle aspects of the literature selection. Many of these students acknowledged directly or indirectly that such ideas as escape and freedom are relative. Many wrote thoughtfully of political and intellectual as well as physical entrapment. Student writing at this level tended to be not merely correct but effective as well.

Major Assignment: Literature Composition

For the first time, students writing the Major Assignment in January 1993 were not provided with a controlling idea that referred directly to the literature selection. The topic—the sense of escape—proved to be “accessible” in that students readily perceived its applicability to various characters and texts.

Students achieving overall scores of **(3) Satisfactory** had no difficulty referring to a character who illustrated some aspect of the human desire to escape. Often students writing at this level suggested that wanting to escape is an indication of weakness, and that “facing reality” is more desirable. Many failed to mention that authors establish conflict/tension in order to reveal character and thereby make a point. Errors in writing skills, matters of choice, and matters of convention seemed frequently to be a result of carelessness rather than incompetence. These writers indicated that they are in control of the conventions of correct language use. There was frequent evidence of choices having been made deliberately to achieve a particular effect. Sometimes these choices resulted in awkwardness of syntax.

Students achieving overall scores of **(4) Proficient** and **(5) Excellent** showed confidence in their use of language and in their ability to interpret both the assignment and the literature thoughtfully and often insightfully. They recognized that many, or most, individuals long to escape from time to time. In their discussion, these students tended to focus on how individuals respond to that longing and how that response affects the course of their lives. Generally, students expressed empathy with characters and their responses. Students chose evidence carefully, and their discussion was controlled and focused.

Question-by-Question Results

Question	Key	Difficulty*
1	B	80.9
2	C	71.6
3	—	—
4	C	69.2
5	D	53.1
6	A	79.4
7	D	76.6
8	C	74.8
9	D	85.6
10	B	60.1
11	D	62.4
12	B	77.3
13	B	67.2
14	C	61.0
15	C	78.9
16	D	81.8
17	A	70.4
18	D	71.7
19	B	71.0
20	D	50.8
21	A	62.0
22	A	80.1
23	B	77.5
24	C	79.8
25	A	68.9
26	B	50.6
27	C	79.2
28	C	88.7
29	A	49.5
30	C	48.4
31	B	64.8
32	C	70.5
33	A	62.4
34	C	56.9
35	—	—
36	D	56.0
37	C	70.9
38	D	64.0
39	A	59.8
40	D	46.6
41	A	56.0
42	A	54.7
43	C	65.7
44	D	72.2
45	B	46.8
46	B	75.4
47	A	53.0
48	D	40.2
49	D	62.7
50	C	70.7
51	D	58.9
52	B	19.3
53	A	66.6
54	A	76.4
55	D	67.1
56	A	71.9
57	C	82.7
58	D	79.8
59	C	58.5
60	A	50.6
61	C	62.1
62	B	67.6
63	A	82.2
64	A	66.1
65	B	80.6
66	A	60.7
67	C	63.8
68	B	65.1
69	B	60.1
70	D	60.6

* Difficulty—percentage of students answering the question correctly

Part B: Reading

The table at the left shows question-by-question results and the keyed answers. Parallel tables in the school and jurisdiction reports show the percentage of students who selected each alternative. From this table, teachers can determine areas of strength and weakness in the achievement of their students relative to the province as a whole and, consequently, areas of strength and weakness in their own programs.

Examination Blueprint

Part B: Reading has a value of 70[†] marks, one mark for each multiple-choice question. Each question is classified in two ways: according to the curricular content area being tested and according to the thinking (process) skill demanded by the question. The examination blueprint illustrates the distribution of questions in January 1993 according to these classifications.

Classification by Course Content	Classification by Thinking Skills			Total
	Literar Understanding	Inference and Application	Evaluation	
1. Meanings	6, 18, 52, 68	2, 4, 23, 24, 26, 29, 30, 43, 44, 48, 50, 53, 54, 55, 56, 62, 63, 65, 66	1, 36, 40, 42, 59, 61, 69, 70	31 items (22%)
2. Critical Response	19, 25	3, 11, 20, 21, 31, 32, 33, 37, 38, 41, 46, 60, 64,	5, 7, 15, 17, 22, 35, 39, 58	23 items (17%)
3. Human Experience and Values		8, 9, 12, 13, 28, 45, 47, 57, 67,	10, 14, 16, 27, 34, 49, 51	16 items (11%)
Total	6 items (4%)	41 items (30%)	23 items (16%)	70 items (50%)

[†]Note: questions 3 and 35 were deleted before mark calculations. The total mark, therefore, was 68.

Subtest Results^{††}

Results are in average raw scores.

Total Part B: 44.8 out of 68

Course Content

- Meanings: 19.9 out of 31
- Critical Response: 13.1 out of 21
- Human Experience and Values: 11.8 out of 16

^{††}Readers are cautioned **not** to compare subtest results because the subtests are not of equal difficulty. Instead, readers should compare these provincial subtest results with their own school subtest results.

Examiners' Comments

During the marking session, a committee of 10 classroom teachers of English 30 reviewed Part B of the January 1993 diploma examination to determine whether the standards embedded in the readings and questions were appropriate and fair. The committee members generally concurred that the examination set an appropriately demanding standard of achievement for graduating English 30 students.

Several committee members thought that the final reading selection, *The Pleasures of Love*, was too difficult and too long to be placed at the end of the examination. They suggested that many students would be uninterested in the subject of long-term love and that the plentiful Shakespearean allusions would impede students' reading. Committee members did agree, however, that the questions based on this selection, 62 to 70, set reasonable expectations for English 30 students. This observation was borne out by the fact that the average difficulty (percentage of students answering correctly) for this group of questions was 67%, which is higher than the overall test average.

Two questions were dropped from Part B. Some members of the review committee considered question 3 to be overly difficult, possibly because the stem of the question included the term "allusion" along with the concept of paradox. Question analysis indicated that Question 35 contained two alternatives, B and D, that were equally attractive to students.

Percentage of Students Correctly

Answering Selected Multiple-Choice Questions

The following table gives results for four multiple-choice questions. For each question, statistics are given for three student groups. The comments on pages 6 and 7 discuss some of the decisions that students may have made and some of the skills that they may have used to answer these questions correctly. The four questions are based on the excerpt from the play *The Winter's Tale*.

Student Group	Question Number			
	42	45	48	51
All students	54.7	46.8	40.3	59.0
Students achieving the standard of excellence (80% or higher, or A) on the whole examination	88.7	78.8	71.0	92.0
Students achieving the acceptable standard who received marks between 50% and 64%, or C, on the whole examination	42.4	35.8	30.2	45.5

Continued

Teachers frequently comment that students find Shakespearean drama very difficult both to read and to comprehend. While this may be true, students writing Part B in January 1993 seem to have risen to the high demands presented by the long excerpt from *The Winter's Tale*.

42. Hermione feels that, despite her innocence, no one will believe her. This is MOST DIRECTLY shown in the lines

- A. "Mine integrity / Being counted falsehood" (lines 5–6)
 - B. "I doubt not then but innocence shall make / False accusation blush" (lines 9–10)
 - C. "my past life / Hath been as continent, as chaste, as true, / As I am now unhappy" (lines 12–14)
 - D. "I appeal / To your own conscience" (lines 24–25)
-

45. When Leontes says "As you were past all shame . . . so past all truth" (lines 67–68), he dismisses Hermione's claim to innocence on the grounds that

- A. Polixenes has confessed
 - B. immoral people easily lie
 - C. evidence has proven her guilt
 - D. Apollo's oracle will convict her
-

48. When Hermione speaks of what she has lost in lines 78 to 80, she refers to

- A. her children
 - B. her reputation
 - C. her royal position
 - D. her husband's love
-

Question 42 was intended to "help" students into the context by offering a summary of Hermione's first long speech. Part of the challenge of the question, however, is that it requires students to select a **best** (most direct) answer from alternatives all containing some measure of correctness. Students must make fine distinctions among alternatives in these evaluation questions. Of the students achieving the standard of excellence (A on the whole examination), 88.7% were successful. Of the students who chose the incorrect alternative B, 47.0% achieved less than 50% on the whole examination. These students may have responded to the words "innocence" and "false accusation" without going back to the text preceding lines 9 and 10 to determine that Hermione's words here present her hopes for a future time rather than the present reality.

Question 45 required students to appreciate speaker's tone. Leontes speaks ironically and in rage when he says that Hermione's child is but a dream. He has closed his mind against her protestations, saying that she is not capable of truth. Leontes believes that he has "evidence" (alternative C) but the question is asking the implication of lines 67 and 68: that Hermione is a shameless adulterer—"those of your fact"—whose sort is incapable of truth. Of the students who incorrectly chose alternative C, 46.8% achieved less than 50% on the whole examination. Perhaps these students missed the ellipsis indicating omission of part of Leontes' speech. A rereading of the complete text of lines 67 and 68 may have led more students to alternative B.

Question 48 required that students read the text lines 78 to 80 carefully enough to recognize that Hermione is being metaphorical when she refers to "the crown" in line 78. Many students, 39.2% of all students, appear to have missed the significant apposition "your favour" and concluded that "the crown" referred to "her royal position," alternative C, rather than to "her husband's love," alternative D. Of those students who correctly chose D, 71.0% achieved the standard of excellence on the whole examination (parts A and B) and 30.2% achieved the acceptable standard. Success on this question appears to have been a matter of noticing punctuation.

-
51. The aspect of human nature that this scene MAINLY illustrates is the way in which
- A. innocence invites tragedy
 - B. vulnerability to error is common
 - C. strong friendship transcends conflict
 - D. ungoverned emotion clouds perception
-

Question 51 required students to recognize a thematic aspect of the reading, a truth about human nature. Students had to choose the best idea from four possibilities. Recognition of the correct response may have depended upon the character judged by students to be “wrong.” To be successful, students must have had some appreciation of how “theme” works, both generally and in terms of the specific reading passage. For example, while innocence (alternative A) may be a factor in tragedy, innocence does not “invite” it. Alternative A attracted 18.8% of all students. Of this group, 36.8% achieved less than 50% on the whole examination (parts A and B).

For further information, contact Gail Gates or Elana Scraba at the Student Evaluation Branch, 427-0010.

